a resolution concerning the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly that, while the US Administration has no plans to seek Senate reconsideration of its decision of October, 1999 not to ratify the CTBT, it will maintain its moratorium on nuclear testing and asked others too to maintain theirs.

(b) The CTBT has not entered into force so far as only 41 among 44 of the so-called Annex 2 States have signed the Treaty and 31 of them have ratified it. The Treaty stipulates ratification by all the Annex 2 States for its entry into force.

India's permanent membership in the Security Council

1294. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the obstacles which United Nations has linked for the issue of permanent membership of India in the Security Council; and

(b) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The issue of the reform and the restructuring of the UN Security Council has been under discussion at the United Nations, for several years. The UN Charter stipulates that any change in the existing structure must be approved by two-thirds of the General Assembly including all Permanent Members of the Security Council.

There is no consensus so far on any of the substantive issues involved such as the criteria for selection of new Permanent Members, the question of veto etc.

India has indicated its willingness to shoulder the responsibilities of Permanent Membership. Support for our candidature is growing. Government is continuing with its efforts to secure permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

Community Information Centres

1295. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the objective of setting up of Community Information Centres;

(b) the number of Community Information Centres set up in the country till date; and

(c) the target fixed for the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) The Community Information Centres (CICs) are intended to provide, *inter alia*, the following benefits for socio-economic development of the community in the North-East region:

(i) internet connectivity through NICNET, *inter alia*, enabling web-browsing and e-mail facilities.

(ii) interface between citizens and Government.

(iii) distance learning programmes.

(iv) familiarising use of computer systems, specially amongst school children.

(v) IT enabled services including e-commerce.

(vi) generation of employment opportunities, and

(vii) dissemination of information on plan initiatives, national programmes, disaster management system, public health awareness, etc.

(b) Thirty Community Information Centres have been set up in the seven North-East States and Sikkim under a pilot project undertaken during 2000.

(c) One hundred and fifty more Community Information Centres are to be set up in the seven North-East States and Sikkim during the current financial year.

Export of software

1296. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of export of software during the current year;

(b) whether Government have set any target therefor;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there has been any slackness in the area of software export after September 11 terrorist attack in America; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by Government to cope up with such a situation?